



NEWS RELEASE



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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APPLE PRODUCTION UP 16 PERCENT FROM 2003

OLYMPIA, Wash., January 18, 2005--“**Washington’s** first production forecast for the 2004 **apple** crop is 5.2 billion pounds, up 16 percent from last year’s crop,” stated Ray Garibay with the Washington Agricultural Statistics Service. The major apple producing areas in the state experienced a mild spring and excellent weather conditions during bloom. This resulted in a good fruit set. Most growers initiated aggressive fruit thinning this season. Wind and hail damage during May impacted only a small percentage of the crop.

Nationally, apple production is forecast at 9.37 billion pounds, up 9 percent from last year and 10 percent above 2002. Increased production in the Eastern and Western States more than offset a projected decrease in the Central States. Production in the Western States is forecast at 5.99 billion pounds, up 15 percent from last year and 1 percent above 2002. California and Utah are the only Western States forecasting decreased production from last year. Factors causing the decrease in production for the Western States are due to the spring heat wave contributing to a smaller sized fruit. Production in the Central States is forecast at 1.12 billion pounds, a decrease of 7 percent from 2003 but 36 percent above 2002. Michigan’s forecast was 760 million pounds, a decrease of 10 percent from 2003 but 46 percent above the weather reduced crop of 2002. All of the Central States except Kansas, Kentucky, Iowa, Illinois and Arkansas are forecasting decreases in production from last year due to a cool, wet spring with severe frosts and early summer hailstorms. In the Eastern States, production is forecast at 2.26 billion pounds, up 3 percent from last year and 26 percent above 2002. Production decreased for all of the Eastern States except for Georgia, North Carolina, New York, New Hampshire, and Maine. A cool spring with heavy frost damage affected most of the Eastern States. Some States also reported hail and above average rainfall as factors limiting crop size.

Bartlett pear production for California, Oregon and Washington is forecast at 457,000 tons, 1 percent higher than the June forecast but unchanged from a year ago. Washington producers expect to harvest 170,000 tons, a 3 percent decrease from the June forecast and 8 percent below last year. California Bartlett production is forecast at 230,000 tons, up 7 percent from the June forecast and 6 percent above 2002. Harvesting began early this season as the crop matured quickly under ideal weather conditions. The favorable growing conditions resulted in a crop with high sugar content, large fruit sizes, and good external quality. Production in Oregon is forecast at 57,000 tons, down 8 percent from the previous forecast but 6 percent above 2003. Weather conditions have been good to excellent except for a passing hail storm which caused some light bruising in the affected growing areas.

Washington **winter pear** production is forecast at 225,000 tons, 5 percent below a year ago and 3 percent below 2002. Growing conditions have been beneficial for fruit development. In Oregon, winter pear production is forecast 151,000 tons, 1 percent above last year and 7 percent above 2002. California's crop is expected to be 48,000 tons, down 13 percent from 2003 and 7 percent below two years ago.

U.S. grape production is forecast at 6.36 million tons, down 3 percent from 2003 and 13 percent below 2002. California leads the U.S. in grape production with 90 percent of the total.

Washington and New York are the next largest producing states, with 5 percent and 2 percent, respectively. **Washington** expects to harvest 310,000 tons, down 10 percent from 2003.

Washington's wine grape production is forecast at 110,000 tons, 2 percent less than last year.

Washington's juice grape production is forecast at 200,000 tons, a decrease of 14 percent from last season. In Benton County, a major Concord producing area, significant berry drop was reported in early July. New York's forecast, at 149,000 tons, is 25 percent below last year.

California's all grape forecast, at 5.70 million tons, is unchanged from the July forecast but 2 percent below 2003. California's wine type production is expected to total 2.90 million tons, unchanged from the July forecast but less than 1 percent below 2003. California's raisin type production is forecast at 2.05 million tons, unchanged from the July forecast but down 5 percent from last year. Production of table type grapes in California is forecast at 750,000 tons, unchanged from the July forecast but 2 percent above last season.

Washington's **prune** production is forecast at 5,000 tons, up 6 percent from last year but 7 percent below 2002. The Oregon forecast, at 14,000 tons, is more than double the weather reduced crop in 2003 and 75 percent above 2002. An early, warm spring, combined with excellent weather conditions during boom, contributed to the large crop. Growing conditions have been excellent throughout the Willamette Valley. If realized, this would be Oregon's largest crop since 1994.

Washington's **peach** production is forecast at 35.0 million pounds, down 12 percent from the previous forecast and 10 percent below last year. The California Freestone crop stands at 780 million pounds, 6 percent below last year and 2 percent below 2002. The Clingstone crop in California is 1.15 billion pounds, 7 percent above last year and 2 percent than the 2002 season.

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